



World Food Programme

WFP

Democratic Republic of Congo Emergency Situation Report #15

9 November 2019

In numbers

15.9 million food insecure people and **5 million** children acutely malnourished

5.2 million people assisted in 2018

5.1 million people targeted in 2019

1.17 million people reached per month on average

Highlights

- In 2019, WFP continues its corporate Level 3 emergency response, planning to reach 5.1 million people with food and nutrition assistance.
- Hunger remains a major concern, as 15.9 million people are considered to be food insecure in the preliminary results of the 17th Integrated Phase Classification. WFP's corporate emergency response has been extended for another six months until April 2020, in order to stem a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

People assisted

September: 1,174,678



People assisted Ebola Response

Since August 2018: 662,000

Situation Update

- Food insecurity remains critical in DRC. The preliminary results of the 17th Integrated Phase Classification ("IPC") indicate that 15.9 million people, representing 26 percent of the population analysed, are food insecure. Conflict and displacement remain the primary drivers of this crisis, alongside insufficient agricultural production and limited access to land. WFP continues its corporate Level 3 emergency response covering the six most populous and conflict-affected provinces in Eastern DRC, Tanganyika and the Greater Kasai region. This emergency response has been extended until April 2020, and now includes a seventh province, Kasai Orientale, where the food security situation has deteriorated drastically this year. WFP is also supporting the DRC Government in tackling the ongoing Ebola epidemic that has so far claimed over 2,100 lives.
- WFP operates in an increasingly complex and challenging environment. Insecurity in Eastern DRC continues to complicate WFP's delivery of humanitarian assistance. In October, WFP staff and beneficiaries were relocated from a

distribution site in Rutshuru, North Kivu, due to armed group activity nearby. Armed clashes in the *hauts and moyens plateaux* of South Kivu province are ongoing and have led to the displacement of over 50,000 vulnerable people in September and October.

- **Ebola:** In more than one year since the beginning of the outbreak, Ebola has infected over 3,200 people and claimed some 2,100 lives. In recent weeks, the number of new Ebola cases has shown a consistent decline. Although this decline is encouraging, reporting is contingent upon the level of access and security. "Hot spots" have shifted from urban settings to more rural, hard-to-reach communities across a more concentrated geographical area.
- On 18 October, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola epidemic remains a public health emergency of international concern. Whilst the number of affected health zones has decreased, ongoing insecurity and community resistance has led to the suspension of activities in certain areas. When response activities are suspended, the likelihood of underreporting and the potential for the disease to spread to new areas increases. WFP supports the calls by the Congolese Government and WHO for greater communication and engagement within communities. WFP continues to support the ongoing response by providing vital food and nutrition assistance, critical logistics services and operational support to the medical response teams, enabling a swift response in remote affected areas.

Photo: WFP/ Claude Kalinga

Children at a health centre in Tshikapa, Kasai province, where WFP provides food assistance to malnourished children and pregnant and nursing women.

Population movement

- **Closure of IDP sites:** In pursuit of its zero internally displaced persons (“IDP”) policy, the government has resumed its closure of IDP sites in Tanganyika province. Some 17,000 IDPs living in and around Kalemie will return to their areas of origin, in a month-long process, overseen by a committee comprised of government authorities and humanitarian actors. WFP is providing returnees with a ration of high-energy biscuits.
- **Congolese returnees from Angola:** Since mid-August, almost 15,000 Congolese refugees residing in Angola have returned to DRC, following an improvement in the security situation in the Kasai region. In close collaboration with UNHCR, WFP is providing cash assistance targeting 16,000 people, high energy biscuits and in-kind food to returnees in transit sites in Kasai and Kasai Central provinces. WFP is also providing specialized nutritious food for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition for children in Kasai Central.

WFP Response

- Despite significant access and logistical challenges, WFP aims to provide life-saving food and nutrition assistance to 5.1 million people across DRC this year. Throughout 2019, WFP has reached an average of 1.17 million people each month and is well on track to reaching its yearly target. Considering the heightened deterioration of the food security situation across the country, WFP will continue to provide scaled-up food and nutrition assistance during the first half of 2020. Sustained financial support is needed to ensure that WFP can effectively respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs.

WFP’s strategic shift towards resilience

- WFP is linking its crisis response interventions with early recovery and resilience activities. WFP implements nutrition-sensitive resilience projects in North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika, North Ubangi and South Ubangi provinces, where 74,000 households will benefit from asset creation, literacy classes and commercialization activities. Working closely with UNHCR, WFP is implementing small-scale livelihood activities for refugees from the Central African Republic in North and South Ubangi provinces to help families better support themselves.



Food, Cash and Nutrition Assistance

Food assistance:

- WFP provides immediate lifesaving food and nutrition assistance to victims of recent conflict and displacement. From January to August, WFP

distributed some 55,600 metric tons of in-kind food and specialized nutritious products through interventions in Eastern DRC, Tanganyika and the Kasai region. WFP has concluded these interventions in Yumbi, Mai-Ndombe province, following inter-ethnic conflict and subsequent displacements reported earlier this year. Despite significant logistical constraints, between April and September, WFP provided food assistance to 69,000 people in Yumbi and its surrounding areas. WFP also distributed specialized nutritious products to 10,000 children to prevent acute malnutrition.

- WFP continues to support school feeding to facilitate access to schools and promote school attendance. So far this year, WFP has provided school meals to 68,000 pupils in North Kivu. This intervention is expanding to Tanganyika and Kasai Central provinces, with 120,000 students to be assisted by year-end.
- **Ebola:** WFP provides food and nutrition assistance to help break the Ebola transmission chain. Since the beginning of the response in August 2018, WFP has provided food and nutrition assistance to over 662,000 people. The provision of food helps minimize the movement of Ebola-affected people, thereby helping contain the spread of the virus. Overall, 39 percent of those surveyed between April and September do not leave their houses every day for the duration of the medical observation period, which is attributed to WFP food assistance. People who do leave their houses on a regular basis cite employment and the need to purchase additional food and non-food items at the markets. Food distributions also continue to encourage some Ebola contacts to come forward for medical follow-up, supporting surveillance and tracing efforts. About 17 percent of the Ebola contacts that have come forward for food assistance were lost or never seen before by the Government’s Surveillance Commission.

Cash-based assistance:

- From January to August, WFP distributed cash and value vouchers worth USD 35 million. Given the logistical hurdles associated with transporting food in DRC, cash assistance enables WFP to assist vulnerable people even in remote, hard-to-reach locations.

Nutrition assistance:

- In 2019, WFP plans to reach 1.5 million children and pregnant and nursing women (PLWs) through the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition and the prevention of acute malnutrition. From January to July this year, WFP successfully reached over 602,000 children and PLWs for both interventions, already exceeding the total number of people reached in 2018.

- WFP works in close collaboration with UNICEF, implementing complementary activities, to strengthen the continuum of care between severe and moderate acute malnutrition.

Supply Chain

- In September and October, WFP experienced severe commodity shortages in Ituri and North and South Kivu provinces. Food is arriving and will be distributed from November. Shortfalls persist in Tanganyika province, where food commodities are only expected to arrive towards the end of November.
- Shortfalls continue to be significant for WFP's prevention of acute malnutrition intervention. With no funding received, a complete pipeline break is expected from January 2020. Should WFP not receive contributions immediately, it will be forced to reduce the number of people supported, increasing the risk of morbidity for children under two years of age.

Clusters and Common Services

Food Security Cluster

- The preliminary IPC results indicate that 15.9 million people are experiencing "crisis" and "emergency" levels of food insecurity (IPC Phases 3 and 4). This represents 26 percent of the population analyzed. Some 27 million people are considered to be in "stress", IPC Phase 2. These people are at risk of slipping further into hunger and need sustained livelihood support. The number of food insecure people in DRC is still underestimated, as not all provinces and territories in the country have been covered by the latest IPC analysis.
- Reasons for the current food security situation include the resurgence of armed and inter-ethnic conflicts, displacement, and extreme poverty. The preliminary results from WFP's joint crop assessment conducted with FAO and the Congolese Government indicate further that agricultural production is also limited by crop diseases and pests, such as the fall army worm. WFP is assisting the Government with capacity building support for early detection of crop diseases.

Logistics Cluster

In response to the humanitarian crisis in DRC, the Logistics Cluster is working closely with its partners to support logistics and operational needs of humanitarian actors involved in the

emergency response. Several maps on access constraints are available [here](#). In October, the Logistics Cluster coordinated the rehabilitation of the Rushoga bridge in North Kivu. This serves as a gateway to Masisi territory, from where many humanitarian operations are conducted.

UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)

- UNHAS is scaling up its operations to meet increased needs in DRC. From January to the end of September, UNHAS transported 48,680 passengers and 761 mt of cargo throughout DRC. It also plays a critical role supporting the Ebola response. With four aircraft, it facilitates the safe movement of health personnel and biological samples for WHO and the Ministry of Health. As of mid-October, UNHAS has transported a total of 32,100 passengers and 430 mt of cargo in Ebola zones since the beginning of the epidemic in August 2018.

Resourcing Update

- **Food and nutrition support:** WFP urgently requires USD 170 million for its lifesaving food and nutrition interventions from November to April 2020. Resources are urgently needed, as millions of people currently rely on WFP for food assistance.
- **Cash:** In December, cash assistance for refugees will run out if no new contributions are confirmed urgently. USD 6 million is needed to cover the first quarter of 2020.
- **Ebola response:** To implement Ebola response activities at full scale between July – December, WFP DRC urgently requires USD 18.7 million for food and nutrition assistance, logistics preparedness, school feeding and air transportation using UNHAS. There are major funding gaps in the nutrition and school feeding programmes to be implemented in Ebola affected areas. With no contributions forecasted, funds are urgently required for these activities.

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